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PT05062

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(D)PAGE 01
ACTION WHA-00

CARACA 00708 050233Z

INFO	LOG-00	COR-01	CIAE-00	DODE-00	SRPP-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SS-00
	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00

/006W

-----7F5088 050233Z /15

R 191403Z MAR 02
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5141
INFO NSC WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
CIA WASHDC
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 000708
C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (DECL DATE)

USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/18/12
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, VE

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SUBJECT: CHARM OFFENSIVE?

CLASSIFIED BY CHARLES S. SHAPIRO, AMBASSADOR: REASONS 1.5 (B)
AND (D)

SUMMARY

1. (C) A NUMBER OF RECENT ACTIONS BY THE GOV SUGGEST A CHARM
OFFENSIVE DIRECTED AT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE PRIVATE SECTOR,
COLOMBIA AND THE U.S. THE OPPOSITION AND CHURCH DO NOT BELIEVE
IN HIS GOOD INTENTIONS. MUCH MORE WILL BE NEEDED TO CONVINCE
THEM. WHETHER CHAVEZ HAS THE CONSISTENCY OF PURPOSE TO DO SO

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ALAN H FLANIGAN
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 18 MAR 2027
DATE/CASE ID: 07 MAR 2007 200503244

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REMAINS TO BE SEEN. END SUMMARY.

THE CHARM OFFENSIVE

2. (C) THE GOV HAS UNDERTAKEN A CHARM OFFENSIVE OF SORTS.
ELEMENTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

-- THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: VP CABELLO PLUS A NUMBER OF MINISTERS
ATTENDED THE INVESTITURE OF THE NEW ARCHBISHOP OF CALABOZO.
THIS IS TOTALLY UNPRECEDENTED FOR THE CHAVEZ GOVERNMENT.

-- THE PRIVATE SECTOR: MINISTER OF FINANCE FRANCISCO USON
RAMIREZ TOLD THE PRESS HE WANTS TO BUILD BRIDGES TO THE PRIVATE
SECTOR AND, IN FACT, AS THE FORMER BUDGET DIRECTOR, USON EARNED
THE RESPECT OF AT LEAST SOME IN THE BANKING COMMUNITY.
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COMMENT

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ABOUT HIS TENURE IN OFFICE. OUR TAKE IS THAT THE OPPOSITION HAS
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[REDACTED] WHATEVER THE MOTIVE FOR THE CHARM OFFENSIVE, BE
IT A TACTICAL SHIFT OR A STRATEGIC REASSESSMENT, ACHIEVING GOOD
RELATIONS AND LETTING STEAM OUT OF THE POLITICAL PRESSURE COOKER
WILL REQUIRE MORE FROM THE CHAVEZ ADMINISTRATION THAN SIMPLY
WISHING IT TO BE TRUE. THE OPPOSITION AND CHURCH QUESTION
CHAVEZ'S MOTIVES AND SIMPLY DO NOT BELIEVE HIS EXPRESSIONS OF
GOOD INTENTIONS. HE WILL NEED TO WORK WITH A CONSISTENCY OF
PURPOSE HE HAS NOT HERETOFORE DEMONSTRATED.

SHAPIRO

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